

NSC BRIEFING

23 December 1953

REAPPOINTMENT OF FIVE DEPUTY CHAIRMEN
OF USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

I. Significance:

A. Appears to be a return to the administrative structure in existence prior to Stalin's death.

1. Under Stalin, there had been 14 Deputy Chairmen.
2. This number reduced to five when economic ministries drastically reduced by amalgamation in March 1953.
3. Since August, many economic ministries have again split.
4. Re-emergence of more than one ministry within an economic complex appears to require a responsible head over each complex.

B. There has been no substantive change in responsibilities held by these men for many years.

1. Three of the men, Pervukhin, Malyshev and Kosygin, had been Deputy Chairmen from 1940 to Stalin's death; Saburov had been a Deputy Chairman since 1947; and Tevosyan since 1949.
2. Under the March amalgamation the sections of the economy for which they were responsible came under a single ministry which they headed.
3. Now that these ministries have generally been recreated, they have again been given title of Deputy Minister for administrative reasons.

II. Principal distinction between present and past organizations:

A. There is now no Deputy Premier in the vital agricultural area.

1. Agriculture is of basic importance in "new course."

2. There are now three ministries in the agricultural area.

B. It is possible that Malenkov himself is responsible for agriculture.

1. He has been very active in the agricultural field since 1946.

C. Agriculture may be handled through party channels by First Secretary N. S. Khrushchev.

1. He has assumed public leadership in agricultural matters since September.

III. Personal characteristics of these men:

A. All are technically trained, able administrators - technicians rather than politicians.

1. All are about 50, approximately the same age as Malenkov.
2. All have made careers through government channels, not the party.
3. All have risen rapidly since the great purges of the 1930s.

IV. Implications of appointments for Malenkov's position:

A. This type of technician is said to be favored by Malenkov.

1. All were elected to the top party body at the October 1952 Party Congress.

2. It is doubtful if this would have been done without Malenkov's approval.
3. Their continuing importance and prominence may be indicative of Malenkov's strength among the leaders.

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Approved For Release 2003/08/26 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000200070001-3

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Approved For Release 2003/08/26 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000200070001-3